PHILADELPHIA, October 29, 1918.

PREAMBLE.

WE, the undersigned laymen of this Diocese, were called together by the Bishop to consider the special duties laid upon the Church at this time. We have reached certain conclusions which are embodied in this paper. We have no authority to make these conclusions practically effective. But we submit them herewith to the clergy and the laity of the Diocese in the hope that they will be found of sufficient weight at least to justify the time and thought which we have given.

I. THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY.

The first question before us was whether this was the proper time for a serious and far-reaching effort to reform and readjust some phases of the Church's life and work. Ought we to wait until the ending of the War shall have relieved the present strain and tension? Unanimously we are of the opinion that the time is now. There should be no delay. The pressure of the War is what gives us our opportunity. Men's hearts are stirred; their minds are opened; their wills are braced for strong efforts toward great goals. Moreover the consequences of the War in social and religious life are certain to be very marked. They may come suddenly. There is instant need of preparation if the Church is to meet strongly and triumphantly the needs and problems of the coming days. The present crisis brings an opportunity which, if not taken now, may pass forever.

II. PROGRAMME.

But it is not enough to recognize the call and challenge of the times. We must have concrete aims

or nothing will be gained. Therefore we suggest the following programme, believing it to be both immediately practical and far-reaching in result.

REVIVAL OF FAMILY WORSHIP.

First.—The regular, frequent, attendance at Holy Communion, and the revival of family prayers in our homes.

To obtain the greatest success in this or any other forward programme of Church work, vital, personal religion is essential. Its best foundation and growth will result from family worship, and regular, frequent, attendance at Holy Communion. From their neglect we lose our effectiveness. We therefore recommend that in every Parish the greatest emphasis be laid upon a revival of these two important duties as a regular practice, to increase our devotion to the service of God and our fellow-men, and obtain that saving grace and certainty of God's Presence so essential in our lives and acts. These are especially requisite to give us confidence and courage in war time and bring comfort to meet the bereavements and losses caused by the War.

FREE PEWS.

Second.—In all Churches of the Diocese, we recommend that all seats or sittings should be made free at the earliest opportunity.

In cases where permanent introduction of the free pew system seems inadvisable or impracticable at present, we suggest that a movement be initiated by the voluntary agreement of indiviuals to pay their customary rents for pews while not claiming the use of particular pews or sittings. The most vital and moving expression and experience of our religion is found in common worship. Our failure in this respect is a spiritual detriment. We are losing for ourselves as Christians the moving inspiration of our faith. We are failing as Christian congregations to draw the multitude into our company.

Making free the pews will not by itself make up this lack, but will mark a real step in advance. The Christian fellowship is essentially a democratic fellowship. Therefore Christian Churches should in fact be "houses of prayer for all people."

SYSTEMATIC SUPPORT FOR ALL CHURCH WORK.

Third.—In every congregation in the Diocese adequate and systematic provision should be made for the financial support of the Church and its work.

This is the very simplest principle of loyalty to the institution or Society which claims us as its members. Yet there is great danger, anxiously felt in many quarters, lest appeals growing out of War emergencies will cut off supplies which are absolutely needed for charitable and religious institutions, and this at the very moment when the strain and pressure of the War is making these institutions more than ever indispensable. We do not minimize the cost, but we believe our people will recognize and discharge their duty when it is pointed out to them. We would strongly urge the need of some definite and reasonable system, approved by and applied to all our membership, by which the crisis may be adequately met and all burdens fairly and evenly distributed. The deliberate setting apart of a definite proportion of our income for Church purposes at home and abroad seems a reasonable service and a sure way to meet the duty of the hour.

UNITED COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Fourth.—The Diocese as a whole and in all its parts and members should be aroused to the opportunity and duty of serving the community in all moral and spiritual interests, and in close and effective union and co-operation with all other Christian people of whatever name.

The Church is in the world not to be ministered unto, but to minister. To be a member of the Church means to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God and to be living

and working for its strengthening and increase. Therefore the needs of the community point us to our pressing social duties. Each Parish and Mission should set itself to be of practical help in all matters vitally affecting its neighborhood or district. Church buildings and Parish houses should be freely open and available for manifold community purposes. While secularization and irreverence are at all costs to be avoided, every legitimate interest of the community should meet our generous sympathy and hospitality and have our resources freely given for its help.

There will be need of something more than isolated Parochial efforts in such social service, valuable as these are. The Diocese as a whole with its immense resources should be organized and mobilized to minister to the needs of the whole community. To this end, as soon as possible, there should be a staff of Diocesan officials, both clerical and lay, to co-ordinate our efforts and to develop the great possibilities for useful service which heretofore have not been realized.

There will be room and opportunity in working towards this end for close and effective union with all Christians. Definite steps should be taken to bring this about.

The breaking down of denominational lines and the consequent emphasizing of men's common spiritual need and of God's one universal Gospel has been for the millions of our enlisted men the most significant religious consequence of the War. This must be recognized and reckoned with bravely and faithfully by us at home.

Without proposing any measures to be taken in the direction of doctrinal or ecclesiastical agreement, we do suggest that a commission or committee be appointed in this Diocese to study the whole subject, especially in relation to the local situation.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP.

Fifth.—The Church should inspire the State, not by direct participation in its affairs, but by so effectively

preaching and teaching good citizenship as to raise the standards of the community, and illuminate the National ideal. Our people should very seriously study political economic conditions, and should be ready to give the best that is in them in time and thought and effort for the support of our Constitution, the preservation of orderly government, and of those institutions through which in the providence of God the nation and its citizens have so greatly prospered in the past.

The appeal for loyalty and service to the Civil Government should be made as universal and irresistible as the Nation's call to arms. To this end the Church of God must ignore dividing denominational lines and must be all-inclusive. It must organize as a great army formed of various corps mobilized for a strenuous campaign to preserve our National ideals and duties.

A legion of patriots has set forth across the seas, to die if need be, defending against the deadliest, attack the world has ever known, the principles and ethics for which this Nation stands. When these men in time return they should be mighty helpers to the State in that period of reconstruction which must ever follow war. If they themselves have learned the lesson they have helped to teach they should be ready to reorganize, in a new fellowship of citizenship, with a deeper sense of individual responsibility and a finer faith.

There could be no better time to train the consciences of men, already aroused by the sacrificial service of the War. There is abundant and significant testimony, from those who have been daily facing the issues of life and death, that there has been for them a great awakening to the common spiritual needs and to the meaning and value of personal religion. May the Church here perceive its opportunity and its obligation.

EVERY MEMBER CAMPAIGN.

Sixth.—Every member of every Parish should be awakened to an adequate conception of the world-wide mission of the Church, and of his relation to it.

We will never rise to the full measure of our responsibility and privilege as followers of our Lord until not only in our public services, but as individuals, we are brought face to face with the great facts of our faith and fully understand the need of their application in all the relations of life, in all places and among all peoples; and realize also that the mission of the Church cannot be accomplished until every member recognizes his stewardship in all that has been entrusted him by God, whether it be of time, ability, personal influence or money.

The Every Member Campaign, wherever properly tried, has proven an effective means of furthering this object, increasing the number of those willing to work in all lines of endeavor in the Church, and adding materially to the financial support needed to maintain and extend the work in the Parish, in the Diocese and in the General Church.

The popular idea associated with a Missionary Campaign primarily and chiefly is money. But in the Every Member Campaign as planned, the emphasis is placed upon our enlistment in the whole mission of the Church to each other, to the Parish, to the Diocese, the Country and other lands. At present not more than one-third of our people are so enlisted as measured by their action. With the gaining of increased knowledge on the subject will come increased loyalty and a desire to express that loyalty in action. One, and perhaps the most obvious expression of loyalty, is the gift of money, but the primary purpose of the campaign will be to encourage the gift of self, that we may be used in all the activities through which, as Christians, our loyalty to Christ and His Church should find adequate expression.

Plans are being matured for such a campaign in our Diocese under the leadership of Rev. Robert W. Patton, D. D., the preparation to be undertaken during the Advent Season and to be brought to fruition during Lent. We urge all our people to unite heartily in making this campaign effective.

III. PROPOSED METHOD OF PROCEDURE.

We recommend the creation of a new council or executive committee as part of the regular machinery of the Diocese. Our reasons for doing so are, partly to have the advantage of a recognized body to which the working out of the problems above indicated and others that may arise in the future may properly be entrusted; and partly owing to a feeling that it would be wise to have a body which would for other purposes represent the Diocese and the convention, and carry on work and help to meet new and vital problems during the greater part of the year when the convention is not in session. It might have great value in co-ordinating the work of the Diocese and making more effective the sessions of the Convention. It could not be regularly established, except by the action of the Diocesan Convention. We have purposely not committed ourselves to any definite proposals as to its proper authority or power; its size; the method by which it shall be chosen; its relation to other Diocesan agencies; or the terms upon which its members shall hold office. But we are convinced that such a step would be well advised and helpful.

Meanwhile, the foregoing subjects on our programme are of such vital importance at the present time that they should not be allowed to wait until the formal or permanent machinery can be provided to take care of them.

We therefore recommend that the Bishop appoint a temporary Council, representative as far as possible of the various interests and activities of the Church, who shall at once take up with him the matters placed on our programme and bring them effectively before the Church.

We suggest the adoption of the following resolutions:

(1) That a new council or executive committee be created as part of the regular machinery of the Diocese.

(2) That the Bishop now appoint a temporary council, of such numbers as he may think best, to which shall be referred (*a*) the foregoing resolution with instructions to consider further the matter and frame such amendments to the canons as may be thought desirable to bring into existence such council; and (*b*) the several matters enumerated as parts of our programme, with instructions to take such steps as may seem practicable to put them into effect.

E. H. Bonsall,
A. J. County,
Lawrence J. Morris,
John S. Newbold,
William H. Reeves,
A. W. Sewall,
R. L. Taylor,
Charlton Yarnall,
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Secretary.